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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/583,459	06/19/2006	Arthur H. Thompson	2004UR004	3699
7590		07/25/2007	EXAMINER	
J Paul Plummer			HUGHES, DEANDRA M	
ExxonMobil Upstream Research Company			ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
P O Box 2189 (Corp-Urc-Sw337)				
Houston, TX 77252-2189			3663	
			MAIL DATE	DELIVERY MODE
			07/25/2007	PAPER

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)
	10/583,459	THOMPSON ET AL.
	Examiner	Art Unit
	Deandra M. Hughes	3663

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --
Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) Responsive to communication(s) filed on 25 June 2007.
- 2a) This action is **FINAL**. 2b) This action is non-final.
- 3) Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) Claim(s) 1-26 is/are pending in the application.
 - 4a) Of the above claim(s) 1-7, 10-13, 15-17 and 19-26 is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) Claim(s) 1,8,9,14 and 18 is/are rejected.
- 7) Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) The drawing(s) filed on 16 June 2006 is/are: a) accepted or b) objected to by the Examiner.
 Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
 Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
 - a) All b) Some * c) None of:
 1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- 1) Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08)
 Paper No(s)/Mail Date 6/19/06.
- 4) Interview Summary (PTO-413)
 Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____.
- 5) Notice of Informal Patent Application
- 6) Other: _____.

DETAILED ACTION

Election/Restrictions

1. Applicant's election with traverse of the embodiment of Figure 2 in the reply filed on 6/25/07 is acknowledged. The traversal is on the ground(s) that the embodiments share a common essence in that "constant potential conductors are arrayed about a receiver area and this tends to minimize electromagnetic fields in that surrounded area..." (page 2, lines 4-7 of paragraph 3).

This is not found persuasive because the Examiner acknowledged that all the disclosed embodiments shared some common features. Hence, the identification of claim 1 as generic to all the species (last line of section 1 of Restriction dated 5/21/07).

Since applicant has not specifically stated that the embodiments are obvious variants of each other and consequently are patentably indistinct, the requirement is still deemed proper and is therefore made FINAL.

Accordingly, claims 2-7, 10-13, 15-17, and 19-26 are withdrawn.

Information Disclosure Statement

2. The information disclosure statement (IDS) filed on 6/19/06 has been considered by the examiner and is found to be cumulative to the art of record.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

3. The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

4. Claim 1 rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

Applicant claims "positioning at least one item of conducting material electrically connected to each other". (lines 1-2 of formerly labeled section (b)). It is not possible for only one item of conducting material to be electrically "connected to each other".

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

5. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

6. Claims 1, 8-9, 14, and 18 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Hornbostel (US 6,477,113 published Nov. 5, 2002).

With regard to claim 1, Hornbostel discloses a method for reducing noise from near-surface conversions of EM to seismic energy in an electro seismic survey of a subsurface formation, said survey using a plurality of near-surface electrodes connected to the output terminals of a source signal generator for transmission of electrical current into the earth said method comprising:

positioning at least one item of conducting material (fig. 7 '+' side to '-' side) electrically connected to each other (#141) to substantially minimize near-surface electric fields in a region between or defined by the at least one item of conducting

material thereby providing an area of low surface noise for survey receiver placement
(col. 9, lines 50-60).

With regard to claim 8, col. 9, line 52 discloses placing receivers near the electrodes.

With regard to claim 9, the electrode wires #143 and #142 are parallel.

With regard to claim 14, col. 10, lines 1-5 disclose the claimed depth range.

With regard to claim 18, there are at least two near electrodes #142 and #143.

Conclusion

7. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure.

8. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Deandra M. Hughes whose telephone number is 571-272-6982. The examiner can normally be reached on M-F, 8:30am-5:00pm.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Jack Keith can be reached on 571-272-6878. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.3

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic

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Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.



Deandra M Hughes
Primary Examiner
Art Unit 3663